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TAGS: SOPN, PINT, KS, US
SUBJ: KOREAN PRESS CONTINUES REPORTS ON PAK TONG-SON CASE
REF: SEOUL 7800 (DTG 140923Z SEP 77)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY BAFleb DATE 2/12/80

SUMMARY: KOREAN PRESS CONTINUES CLOSE FOLLOWING OF WASHINGTON DEVELOPMENTS IN PAK TONG-SON CASE, NOTING US RESPONSE HAS BEEN DELAYED. TONGA ARTICLE HINTS STRONGLY THAT ROKG DESIRES THAT US INVESTIGATORS REQUEST TO VISIT KOREA. END SUMMARY.

1. ON SEPTEMBER 15, KOREAN VERNACULAR FRONT-PAGE PRESS COVERAGE OF PAK TONG-SON AFFAIR WAS SOMEWHAT REDUCED, PARTLY BECAUSE OF TOP STORIES DEVOTED TO LARGE FIRE IN NAMDAEMUN MARKET. AFTERNOON PAPERS GENERALLY CARRIED WIRE SERVICE STORIES QUOTING ASST ATTORNEY GENERAL CIVILETTI THAT US DEPT OF JUSTICE WAS STILL WORKING FOR RETURN OF PAK AND HAD NOT DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY OF WITHDRAWING ITS REQUEST FOR PAK'S

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RETURN. SECOND WIRE-SERVICE STORIES NOTED SPECIAL COUNSEL JAWORSKI'S CANCELIATION OF PLANNED STATEMENT, HIS CLOSED MEETING WITH HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR NEARLY TWO HOURS, AND JAWORSKI'S AND CHAIRMAN FLYNT'S COMMENTS ON EMERGING THAT "EXTREMELY SENSITIVE ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED."

2. TONGA ILBO ALSO CARRIED ABOVE TWO ARTICLES BUT ADDED LEAD ARTICLE OF ITS OWN TO EFFECT THAT SOLUTION OF PAK TONG-SON CASE WOULD TAKE SOME TIME, AS US SEEMS TO BE ADJUSTING ITS POSITION AND POSITIONS OF BOTH US AND KOREA MUST THEN BE COORDINATED. STORY, NOTING THAT US HOPES FOR SATISFACTORY INVESTIGATORY PROCEDURES AND ROK SYAS IT WILL HELP WITHIN BOUNDS OF "RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY," SAYS ROKG POSITION OF "COMPROMISE IN ADVANCE" BECAME KNOWN SEPTEMBER 15. STORY QUOTES "A SOURCE" AS SAYING THAT ROKG MUST APPROVE JAWORSKI'S VISIT IN ADVANCE AND, IF US FORMALLY SUGGESTS VISIT BY INVESTIGATORS, DIPLOMATIC COMPROMISES WILL FOLLOW ON

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DETAILED PROCEDURES AND METHODS OF INVESTIGATION. IN CONSIDERING USE OF LOCKHEED CASE AS PRECEDENT, TWO POSSIBILITIES ARISE: US INVESTIGATORS WILL LISTEN WHILE ROK PROSECUTORS ASK QUESTIONS, OR JAWORSKI MAY QUESTION PAK DIRECTLY. STORY ALSO MENTIONS POSSIBILITY OF COMPLICATIONS, IF PAK INSISTS ON IMMUNITY FROM US AS PRECONDITION FOR APPEARING. STORY ENDS WITH NOTE THAT. IF JAWORSKI VISIT IS DECIDED ON BEFORE MEETING OF FONMIN PAK AND SECSTATE VANCE, TWO FONMINS MIGHT COMPROMISE ON TIS ISSUE AND THAT, IF US WITHDRAWS DEMAND FOR PAK'S RETURN AND CHOOSES DISPATCH OF INVESTIGATORS AS SECOND BEST MEASURE, QUESTIONS OF PROCEDURES CAN ULTIMATELY BE WORKED OUT THROUGH POLITICAL COMPROMISE.
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3. TONGA ILBO ALSO RAN EDITORIAL SAYING ROKG POSITION TO HAVE PROSECUTORS SIT IN ON US INTERROGATIONS IS CORRECT, BUT THAN NO EFFORTS SHOULD BE SPARED TO MAINTAIN TRADITIONAL ROK-US FRIENDSHIP. HOPE IS THAT PAK AFFAIR WILL BE SETTLED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS BEFORE TWO FONMINS MEET, SO THAT THEY CAN DISCUSS MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM OF COMPENSATORY MEASURES FOR TROOP WITHDRAWAL, EDIT CONCLUDES.
4. ALL PAPERS NOTED THAT PAK'S LAWYER, WILLIAM HUNDLEY (PHONETIC) IS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE FOR KOREA ON SEPTEMBER 16. KYONGHYANG SINMUN ALSO RAN FRONTA-PAGE COLUMN BY CH'OE SOK-CH-AE. CHAIRMAN OF BOARD, ASKING WHETHER US PREPARED TO EXCHANGE PAK TONG-SON FOR KIM HYONG-UK OR KIM SANG-GUN.
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